

OLIVER AMES FREE LIBRARY
53 Main Street
North Easton
Bristol County
Massachusetts

HABS NO. MA-1220

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PHOTOGRAPHS AND
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE Massachusetts	COUNTY Bristol	TOWN OR VICINITY North Easton
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) OLIVER AMES FREE LIBRARY		HABS NO. MA-1220
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 53 Main Street		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1877-1883	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Henry Hobson Richardson	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) The library was designed by Henry Hobson Richardson, one of America's greatest architects. Richardson's name has become synonymous with Romanesque design. Together with Landscape Architect, Frederick Law Olmstead, Richardson worked under the patronage of the Ames family to create a planned town containing some of the century's architectural landmarks.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Richardson Romanesque		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Light brown Milford granite laid in random ashlar with dark reddish brown Longmeadow brownstone trim. Roof of tile over a wood barrel-vaulted stack wing ceiling.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Rectangular in plan with major rooms, stack wing, hall & reading room arranged longitudinally, with a broad gable projecting from the north end.		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE Arched entry and arched windows separated by pairs of short columns supporting the arches. belfry atop, beautiful rusticated stonework, tiered watertable		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) stack room with vaulted ceiling, two stories of book stacks with decorative, turned woodwork; large carved stone fireplace in reading room, the work of Stanford White.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES Red brick children's wing added to the rear in 1931 (eliminating the original laboratory and document room). Additional shelving has been added to the stack room.		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Excellent; used as a library.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE This is one of 5 Richardson buildings in this historic district. The Ames family established a shovel factory here which reaped enormous profits due to the construction of railroads and canals and the gold rush of California.		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) National Register nomination, prepared by Carolyn Pitts, Historian, NPS, History Division, 1988.		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION C. Lavoie, Historian, HABS/HAER		DATE February 1989

ADDENDUM TO:
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